

# VARUNA-2021

April 27, 2021

**In News:** The 19th edition of the Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'Varuna-2021' started in the Arabian Sea on April 25, 2021.

## Background

- Since 1993, the Indian and French navies have conducted bilateral maritime exercises. These exercises have been known as 'VARUNA' since 2001.
- These encounters highlight the common interests of partner navies in ensuring maritime independence and a commitment to a transparent, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order.

## About VARUNA-2021

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is involved in the Varuna maritime exercise for the first time in 2021.
- The 'Varuna' joint exercise is part of the 'CLEMENCEAU 21' deployment of the French carrier strike force, which is taking place in the eastern Mediterranean, the Gulf, and the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea).
- Its aim is to help stabilise these strategic zones by strengthening cooperation with partner countries' navies, especially India for the Indian Ocean portion.
- The Carrier Strike Group is also participating in anti-ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) operations as part of this deployment.
- High-speed naval activities at sea will be part of the exercise, which will include advanced air defence and anti-submarine drills, operational manoeuvres, underway replenishment, and other maritime security operations.

## Other Indo-French Exercises

- Varuna (Naval exercise)
- Desert Knight-21 and Garuda (Air exercise)
- Shakti (Army exercise)